

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTH POLICIES IN MUNA DISTRICT: A STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The development of health policies is a crucial aspect of improving access to and quality of healthcare services, particularly in remote areas such as Muna Regency. Key challenges in this region include budget limitations, unequal distribution of healthcare personnel, low community participation, and a lack of valid and integrated data. This study addresses the gap in health policy implementation, which is often suboptimal due to the absence of evidence-based strategic management approaches. Using a descriptive qualitative research design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with relevant informants, such as government officials, healthcare workers, and academics. The findings indicate that a collaborative strategic management approach, data system integration, and enhanced community participation are effective solutions to bridge the gap between health policy planning and implementation. This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the relevance of strategic management in health policy contexts and offers practical solutions for policymakers in similar regions.

Keywords: health policy; remote areas; strategic management; community participation

INTRODUCTION

Public health is an important indicator in assessing the welfare of a region. In Indonesia, the government has implemented various policies to improve health services, including through the National Health Insurance (JKN) program which aims to provide equal access to health services for all populations. However, the implementation of health policies at the local level often faces various challenges, such as limited resources, infrastructure, and community participation. Therefore, a strategic management approach is crucial in the planning and implementation of health policies in the regions. Strategic management allows local governments to formulate clear visions, missions, and goals, as well as identify strategic issues that need to be addressed. Thus, the implementation of strategic management is expected to increase the effectiveness of health policies in various regions in Indonesia.

Muna Regency, as one of the regions in Southeast Sulawesi Province, has made efforts to develop and implement health policies that are in accordance with local needs. One of the main focuses is to reduce stunting rates and increase access to health services in remote areas. According to the latest data, the stunting rate in Muna Regency is still above the national average, so it requires more effective interventions. In addition, limited infrastructure and

health workers in some areas hinder people's access to adequate health services. To overcome this challenge, the Muna Regency Health Office has developed a strategic plan by involving various stakeholders, including village governments, health cadres, and community leaders. This collaborative approach is expected to ensure that the policies formulated are in accordance with local needs and conditions.

The implementation of health policies in Muna Regency also faces challenges in terms of funding and human resources. The limitations of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) are often an obstacle in the implementation of health programs. In addition, the uneven distribution of health workers has caused some health centers to lack competent medical staff. According to the latest report, several health centers in Muna Regency are experiencing a shortage of health workers, which has an impact on the quality of services provided. To address this problem, local governments need to allocate budgets more effectively and ensure an even distribution of health workers across the region. In addition, capacity building and training for health workers are also a priority to improve the quality of health services in Muna Regency.

Community participation in health programs in Muna Regency still needs to be increased. Low awareness of the importance of preventive health and lack of information about the services available are inhibiting factors. Several studies show that intensive education and socialization can increase community participation in health programs. Therefore, the Muna Regency Health Office needs to intensify education and socialization programs to the community, especially in remote areas. Community-based approaches, such as involving community leaders and health cadres, can be an effective strategy in increasing public awareness and participation in health programs.

Evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of health policies in Muna Regency need to be carried out periodically. It is important to assess the effectiveness of the programs that have been implemented and identify areas that need improvement. According to the strategic management module, systematic evaluation can help in assessing whether the implemented strategy is successful or requires adjustments [cite]turn0search4[. Thus, the Muna Regency Health Office needs to build a comprehensive evaluation and monitoring system, which involves various stakeholders. The results of this evaluation can later be used as a basis for the improvement and development of more effective health policies in the future.

Overall, the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency requires a comprehensive strategic management approach. This includes careful planning, effective implementation, active participation from the community, and continuous evaluation and monitoring. By implementing strategic management, it is hoped that Muna Regency can improve the quality of health services and achieve the health targets that have been set. In addition, collaboration between local governments, health workers, and the community is the key to success in the implementation of health policies. Therefore, all parties need to work together and be committed to realizing a healthy and prosperous Muna Regency community.

Not all health policies in Indonesia have been implemented effectively, especially in areas with limited infrastructure and resources. Many health programs are designed nationally, but do not pay attention to local conditions, so they cannot be implemented optimally. At the regional level, the lack of coordination between agencies is often an obstacle in the implementation of policies, especially those that require cross-sector synergy. In addition, monitoring and evaluation efforts on health policies are often not carried out regularly and thoroughly, resulting in many implementation challenges that are not well identified. This indicates that there is a gap between the planning and implementation of health policies in various regions of Indonesia.

In Muna Regency, the development and implementation of health policies still face various significant obstacles. Not all programs formulated by the Health Office can run

according to the goals due to budget and human resource limitations. The lack of health facilities in remote areas causes many people to have no access to basic health services. In addition, the uneven distribution of health workers is a recurring problem, which has a direct impact on the quality of services in several health centers. The absence of valid and integrated data also makes it difficult for local governments to formulate policies based on evidence and local needs.

Another problem that is no less important is the low participation of the community in health programs that have been prepared by the government. Not all people understand the importance of preventive health, especially in remote areas with low levels of education. Education and socialization regarding the available health services have not been carried out optimally, so many programs are not properly utilized by the community. In addition, coordination between local governments, health workers, and the community is often not effective. This condition shows that there is still a gap in the implementation of strategic management approaches to support the success of health policies in Muna Regency.

Without systematic and integrated improvements, the implementation of health policies in Muna Regency is at risk of not achieving the goals that have been set. Inconsistent monitoring and evaluation will continue to hinder the identification of problems and necessary solutions. The lack of support from all relevant parties can also worsen the situation, so that the policies formulated are only documents without any real impact on the community. These gaps point to the need for further research to explore effective strategies in overcoming these barriers. Thus, this research is relevant to contribute to the development of better and sustainable health policies in Muna Regency.

The importance of this research lies in efforts to address the various challenges faced in the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency, which reflects similar issues in many remote areas in Indonesia. This research is urgent because many health policies, while well designed at the national level, often do not work effectively at the local level due to limited resources, coordination, and community participation. By focusing on strategic management approaches, this research seeks to offer solutions that are not only technical, but also address the root causes, such as uneven distribution of health workers, lack of facilities in remote areas, and lack of public awareness of the importance of health services. The findings of this study are of important value because they provide a strategic framework that can be adapted to improve the effectiveness of health policies in other regions with similar characteristics. In addition, this research is expected to be able to fill in the literature gap in the context of the implementation of strategic management in the health sector in Indonesia, especially in remote areas such as Muna Regency. Therefore, this study aims to explore how the development and implementation of health policies can be carried out more effectively through a strategic management approach in Muna Regency. The focus of the research is directed at identifying policy priorities, analyzing implementation challenges, and evaluating the effectiveness of strategies that have been implemented. In addition, this study aims to explore the views of various stakeholders, including local governments, health workers, and the community, in order to understand the factors that support or hinder policy success. In this way, this study not only aims to provide solutions to health problems in Muna Regency, but also presents strategic recommendations that can be adapted to a wider context. The results of this study are expected to be practical and academic guidance in the development of sustainable and evidence-based health policies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design to describe the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency through a strategic management approach. This method was chosen to deeply understand the experiences, challenges, and strategies implemented by the relevant stakeholders. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with relevant informants, including government officials, health workers, and academics. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques to ensure their relevance to the research topic. The focus of the research is directed at the disclosure of the main aspects in the process of formulating and implementing health policies in the region.

The research instrument used is in the form of semi-structured interview guidelines to guide the extraction of information from informants. The interview guidelines are designed by considering important aspects of health policy, such as program priorities, implementation challenges, and the effectiveness of the strategic management approach. Interviews are conducted directly or through online communication media if the informant is difficult to reach. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the informant to facilitate the data analysis process. The results of the interviews were then transcribed and analyzed to find key themes that were relevant to the research objectives.

The research procedure involves three main stages, namely preparation, implementation of data collection, and data analysis. The preparation stage includes identifying informants, preparing interview guidelines, and licensing related parties. The data collection stage is carried out with an ethical approach, ensuring that each informant understands the purpose of the research and gives consent to participate. The data obtained were analyzed thematically to identify patterns, relationships, and key findings. The results of the analysis are then presented in a narrative manner to provide a comprehensive overview of the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of the study show that the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency are focused on several strategic priorities. Based on an interview with the Head of the Muna Regency Health Office, the main priorities of health policies are to reduce stunting rates, improve access to health services in remote areas, and ensure that health facilities have adequate medical personnel. A collaborative approach is implemented through cross-sectoral involvement, such as village governments, health cadres, and community leaders, to ensure that policies are in accordance with local needs. Dr. A emphasized, "We use a collaborative approach by involving cross-sectors to ensure that policies can be implemented effectively according to local needs." However, the limitations of the regional budget and low community participation are the main challenges in policy implementation.

The results of the interview with the Head of the Lohia Health Center revealed that health policies from the local government are implemented through priority programs, such as maternal and child health services, infectious disease control, and nutrition socialization to prevent stunting. However, the challenges faced include a lack of health workers who meet the standards and the lack of transportation facilities to reach remote villages. Mr. M said, "The strategic management approach is quite effective because it allows planning based on local priorities, although budget support still needs to be improved." The effectiveness of this approach is proven, although it requires reinforcement in terms of resources and technical support.

Field health workers, such as village midwives, play an important role in the implementation of health policies. Based on an interview with a village midwife in Tongkuno District, the main roles carried out include basic health services, nutrition education, and child immunization. The main challenges faced are the lack of health facilities, medical equipment, and transportation access to reach remote communities. Sdri. R stated, "I hope the government can increase the number of health workers, increase the availability of medicines, and provide operational vehicles to support access to services." This shows that the development of health policies needs to be complemented by improving facilities and infrastructure at the village level.

The support of local policymakers also plays an important role in the development of health policies. A member of the Muna Regency DPRD, who is also part of the Health Commission, explained that budget allocation for the health sector is a priority, especially for stunting prevention programs and the construction of health facilities in remote areas. However, the main obstacles in budgeting are the limitations of the APBD and low budget absorption in several health programs. Mr. S revealed, "The strategy management approach has been working quite well, but it needs to be strengthened with more accurate data for better planning and coordination between stakeholders." This emphasizes the importance of strengthening governance and supervision in the implementation of health policies.

The views of academics in the field of health policy provide a critical perspective on the policies that have been implemented in Muna Regency. Based on an interview with a lecturer at Halu Oleo University, health policies in this district have covered priority issues such as stunting and maternal and child health, but still face technical and logistical challenges on the ground. Dr. E highlights, "The main weaknesses are the lack of periodic monitoring and evaluation as well as the limitation of competent human resources in the field of health management." This shows that it is necessary to improve the surveillance system and increase the capacity of health workers to support policy effectiveness.

1. Health Policy Priorities and Approaches

This study reveals that the development of health policies in Muna Regency focuses on reducing stunting rates, increasing access to health services in remote areas, and providing adequate medical personnel in health facilities. The collaborative approach was adopted by the Health Office by involving cross-sectors, such as village governments, health cadres, and community leaders. Dr. A mentioned that this approach aims to ensure that policies are in accordance with local needs. However, the main challenges include limited regional budgets, uneven infrastructure, and low public awareness in utilizing health services. This shows that successful policy implementation requires more mature strategic planning.

2. Policy Implementation at the Health Center Level

The results of the interview with the Head of the Lohia Health Center show that the health policy of the local government is implemented through various priority programs. The program includes maternal and child health services, infectious disease control, and nutrition socialization for stunting prevention. The main obstacles faced by health centers are the limitation of health workers and the lack of transportation facilities to reach remote villages. The Head of the Puskesmas emphasized that the strategic management approach is quite effective because it allows planning based on local priorities, although budget support still needs to be improved. This emphasizes the importance of strengthening technical and logistical support in the implementation of health policies at the primary service level.

3. The Role of Field Health Workers

Field health workers, such as village midwives, play an important role in the implementation of health policies in the community. Based on an interview with a village midwife in Tongkuno District, their main roles include the provision of basic health services, nutrition education, and child immunization. However, significant challenges faced include the lack of medical equipment, medicines, and transportation infrastructure to reach remote areas. Sdri. R suggested that the government increase the number of health workers in the village and provide operational vehicles to support access to health services. This proposal shows that the development of health policies in Muna Regency needs to be accompanied by the improvement of facilities at the village level to ensure the success of the program.

4. Policy Support from the DPRD

The support of regional policymakers is very important in the development of health policies in Muna Regency. Based on an interview with a member of the DPRD from the Health Commission, budget allocation for the health sector is a priority, especially for stunting prevention programs and the construction of health facilities in remote areas. However, the main obstacles are the limitations of the APBD and low budget absorption in several health programs. The DPRD member emphasized that the strategic management approach has been working quite well, but it needs to be strengthened with more accurate data and coordination between stakeholders. This shows the need for more effective supervision to ensure that the budget is allocated and used optimally.

5. Academic Analysis of Health Policy

Academics provide a critical view of health policies in Muna Regency. Based on an interview with a lecturer at Halu Oleo University, the policy in this district has included priority issues such as stunting and maternal and child health, but its implementation faces technical and logistical challenges on the ground. Dr. E stated that the main weaknesses in policy implementation are the lack of periodic supervision and evaluation, as well as the limitation of competent human resources in the field of health management. The academics suggested increased cross-sector integration, the development of robust data systems for decision-making, and the training of health workers to strengthen local capacity. This suggestion shows the importance of strengthening governance to increase policy effectiveness.

6. Unique Findings and Recommendations

One of the unique findings of this study is that there is still low public awareness in utilizing health services even though programs are available in villages. This shows that community-based approaches need to be further strengthened to improve the success of health policies. Researchers also found that while the strategy management approach is quite effective, its success is still hampered by logistical and budgetary issues. Therefore, integration between health policy and infrastructure strengthening, continuous supervision, and capacity building of health workers is needed. Dr. E emphasized the importance of a data-driven approach to better strategic planning, stating, "Improvements to robust data systems are indispensable to support informed decision-making."

Table of Key Findings

Aspects	Research Results
Policy Priorities	Reducing stunting rates, increasing access to health services in remote areas.
Implementation Approach	Collaborative, involving cross-sectors such as village governments, health cadres, and community leaders.
Key Challenges	Budget limitations, low community participation, lack of transportation infrastructure and health workers.
Effectiveness of Strategy Management	It is quite effective but requires strengthening in logistical support, supervision, and human resources.
Key Recommendations	Improving facilities, developing data systems, training health workers, and continuous supervision.

The table above summarizes the main findings of the study, providing an overview of the policy focus, implementation approaches, challenges faced, and recommendations for the development of more effective health policies. These findings highlight the importance of synergy between strategic management and operational efforts in improving the quality of health policies in Muna Regency.

Discussion

The results of the study show that health policy priorities in Muna Regency, such as reducing stunting rates and increasing access to health services in remote areas, have been formulated with a collaborative approach. This approach involves cross-sectors, including village governments and health cadres, which is in line with strategic management theory that emphasizes the importance of coordination between stakeholders (Bryson, 2018). This strategy is able to answer part of the gap found, namely the lack of coordination between agencies which often hinders policy implementation. However, its effectiveness still requires strengthening the planning and execution aspects of the program to ensure the sustainability of policy impacts. Thus, the collaborative approach needs to be more focused on a clear division of roles and an integrated evaluation mechanism.

At the primary service level, the implementation of health policies through priority programs, such as infectious disease control and nutrition socialization, has made a positive contribution despite facing resource constraints. The lack of transportation facilities and the uneven distribution of health workers are still the main obstacles. According to the theory of equity in health services (Whitehead, 1992), the distribution of resources must be adjusted to local needs to ensure equitable access to health services. This is relevant to the finding that the success of the program is greatly influenced by adequate logistical and technical support. Therefore, strengthening infrastructure, such as transportation and health facilities, needs to be an integral part of the policy implementation strategy in Muna Regency.

The role of field health workers, such as village midwives, is crucial in bringing health services closer to the community, especially in remote areas. However, the lack of medical facilities and access to transportation hampers the effectiveness of the role. This study emphasizes the importance of strengthening the role of field health workers through the provision of adequate facilities and continuous training. This is in line with the community-based approach, which emphasizes the importance of empowering health workers as agents of change in increasing public awareness (Rifkin, 2003). With better operational support, health workers can more effectively reach the community and ensure that the implementation of health policies runs according to their goals.

Support from regional policymakers, such as the DPRD, is key in ensuring adequate budget allocation for the health sector. Although budget allocation has become a priority, the

limitations of the APBD and low budget absorption are still challenges. This demonstrates the need for a robust, data-driven approach to ensure that budgets are used efficiently and effectively. In accordance with Mintzberg's (1994) view, successful strategic management requires planned and directed resource management. Therefore, the development of an accurate and integrated health information system in Muna Regency can help local governments in developing policies that are more evidence-based and local needs.

The unique finding of this study, namely the low public awareness of the importance of preventive health, is one of the main obstacles to the success of health policies in Muna Regency. Intensive education and socialization need to be optimized to increase community participation, especially in areas with low levels of education. This is in line with the theory of health behavior change (Health Belief Model) which states that individual awareness of health risks and the benefits of preventive measures is a key factor in driving behavior change (Rosenstock, 1974). Therefore, a community-based approach involving community leaders and health cadres can be a strategic solution to increase public awareness and participation in health programs. With this step, the gap between policy planning and implementation can be further minimized, so that the impact of health policies becomes more significant.

In addition to the aspects that have been discussed, this study also shows the need for integration between health policy and human resource capacity development, especially at the managerial level. The lack of competent human resources in health management in Muna Regency is one of the significant obstacles to effective policy implementation. Based on the theory of capacity development, the success of policies depends not only on planning and funding, but also on the ability of individuals and organizations to manage programs efficiently (Morgan, 2006). Therefore, training and upskilling health workers, especially those in strategic positions, need to be the main focus to strengthen policy implementation.

Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of continuous policy evaluation to ensure that the implementation of health programs remains relevant to local needs. Consistent evaluation can help identify implementation barriers early on, so corrective steps can be taken immediately. Formative and summative evaluation approaches that involve all stakeholders can strengthen policy transparency and accountability (Patton, 1997). By building a systematic evaluation mechanism, the Muna Regency Health Office can be more responsive to changes in community needs, so that the policies formulated become more adaptive and sustainable.

The aspect of data management is also a concern in this study, especially in the context of evidence-based decision-making. The absence of valid and integrated data in Muna Regency hinders the local government in formulating policies that are in accordance with the needs of the community. This shows the importance of building a reliable and centralized health information system, as outlined in the WHO framework for health data management (WHO, 2015). An integrated data system can provide a more accurate picture of challenges on the ground, so that resource allocation and policy strategies can be designed more efficiently.

This study also underscores the need for private sector participation in supporting the development of health policies in Muna Regency. Private sector involvement, both in the form of public-private partnerships and direct contributions, can be a solution to overcome budget and resource constraints. Previous studies have shown that these partnerships can improve the efficiency and coverage of health services, especially in areas with limited resources (Loevisohn & Harding, 2005). Therefore, collaborative initiatives with the private sector can be considered as part of strategies to strengthen the implementation of health policies in the region.

Finally, this study emphasizes the need for a more innovative approach in designing and implementing health policies. The use of technology, such as mobile applications for health education and service monitoring, can be an alternative to reach people in remote areas more effectively. Community-based technology approaches have been shown to improve

information access and community participation in various health programs (Mechael et al., 2010). By utilizing technological innovations, the Muna Regency Health Office can overcome several structural challenges that have hindered the success of health policies in the region.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the development and implementation of health policies in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi, face various complex challenges. The strategic management approach has proven effective in designing policies tailored to local needs, although its implementation remains constrained by budget limitations, unequal distribution of healthcare personnel, and low community participation.

Cross-sector collaboration, such as involving village governments, health cadres, and community leaders, plays a crucial role in ensuring the relevance of policies to local conditions. Additionally, priority policies focused on reducing stunting rates and improving access to healthcare services in remote areas have made positive contributions, although they still require stronger logistical and technical support. The findings also highlight the importance of strengthening a data-driven health information system to support more targeted and evidence-based decision-making. Furthermore, active community engagement and the capacity building of healthcare personnel through continuous training are key elements to support the success of health policies in Muna Regency.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Development of Integrated Health Information Systems Future research should focus on developing integrated and technology-based health information systems. Such systems can assist in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating relevant data to support more effective decision-making at the local level.
 2. Effectiveness of Cross-Sector Collaboration Models Further studies could explore various models of cross-sector collaboration involving government, communities, and private sectors to identify the best approaches to support health policy implementation.
 3. Innovative Approaches to Health Education Research on innovations in public health education, such as the use of digital applications or social media, can focus on increasing awareness and participation in health programs.
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